



# County Commuter



Spring 2001

## Club Vanpool Kicks Off!

It's finally here! The County's application for a vanpool program grant was approved for funding by the Orange County Transportation Authority, and after a few months of research and development, it's ready to get rolling.

The grant will be used to help employees get started in a new vanpool. Subsidies will be provided during the first three months of operation, and used to pay for the lease payment as follows:

- First month lease payment will be covered 100%
- Second month lease payment will be covered 75%
- Third month lease payment will be covered 50%

Beginning with the fourth month, the subsidy will no longer be provided, however, the Commuter Assistance Program staff will be available to answer questions and provide support and assistance.



You might be wondering what a vanpool is, and how much it costs? A vanpool is a group of 8 to 15 people who commute together on a regular basis. One person volunteers to be the driver/coordinator of the van, and the riders share a fee that covers the vanpool fare. The people on the van usually travel 20 miles one-way to work, maintain a consistent work schedule, and live and work near each other. The riders pay a monthly fare tied to the operating costs of the van – mainly the rental fee (lease) and fuel. The fares vary depending upon the type of van, features, accessories, commute distance, number of riders and so on. The average cost for commuting by vanpool is \$70 to \$120 per person/per month.

If you're tired of driving everyday, and would like to get some extra sleep, read or just relax on your way to work, then all you have to do is complete a **Club Vanpool** Interest Form and fax or mail it to the Rideshare Office. These forms are available on the rideshare program web site [www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare](http://www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare) or at the Commuter Information Display Rack in most buildings. We'll add your name to our vanpool database, and as soon as we have about ten other employees who work a similar schedule to yours and live and work near you, we'll call you and get you into a **Club Vanpool** formation meeting!

## Club Vanpool Special Event

To learn more about vanpooling and the **Club Vanpool** program, mark your calendar for **Wednesday, May 23, 2001 from 11:00 to 1:00**. Representatives from the vanpool service provider, VPSI, will be in the Santa Ana Civic Center Plaza area with some vans and they'll be able to answer all of your questions. Bring in your **Club Vanpool** Interest Form – we'll have several drawings for a chance to win special prizes. Come see how comfortable your ride to work can be – you might even be a winner too!

## Commuter Club News

In the last issue of the County Commuter, we announced that continuing Commuter Club members now receive a National Values Coupon Book in addition to discounts from various MainPlace merchants. Over 600 employees have completed the Commuter Club Renewal Form or have registered for the very first time. If you did not receive a Commuter Club Renewal application in the mail, please call the Commuter Assistance Message Center at (714) 834-4068, or send us e-mail at [cap@tvsconsulting.com](mailto:cap@tvsconsulting.com).

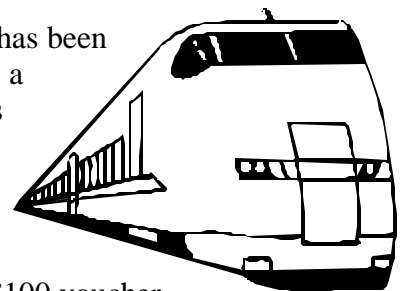
Great news! We also have four new merchants at the MainPlace Mall in Santa Ana, they are:

- Glamour Shots
- Nordic Track
- Steak Escape
- The Whitehouse/Black Market

Welcome aboard! Please visit these great merchants and use your Commuter Club card, and be sure and thank them for helping to reduce congestions and smog in Orange County.

## Metrolink

Good news! The **Get Into Training** commuter rail subsidy program has been extended for another year! You still have a chance to try Metrolink at a substantial discount for the first few months. The Program Guidelines and Application Forms are available at the Commuter Information Display Racks or can be printed from the Commuter Assistance Program web site [www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare](http://www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare).



Each quarter, as part of the **Get Into Training** program, we award a \$100 voucher good toward the purchase of a monthly Metrolink/Amtrak pass. The winner of this quarters' drawing is Laura Zadeh. Congratulations!

## Road Rage – How To Avoid Aggressive Driving

More than 10,000 people were hurt or injured during incidents of “road rage” in a six-year period, according to an AAA study. Here are some suggestions on how you can avoid being a victim:

Be aware of how you are driving – surveys show that the things most likely to infuriate other drivers and put you at risk are:

- ☐ Cutting them off
- ☐ Driving slowly in the left lane
- ☐ Tailgating
- ☐ Making rude gestures

If you ever find yourself in a hostile situation with another driver:

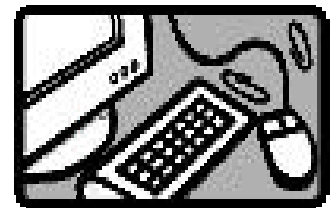
- ☐ Don’t engage – if you sense another driver is angry with you, don’t give them anything to fuel their fire, instead:
- ☐ Steer clear
- ☐ Avoid eye contact
- ☐ Drive to a place where there are other people around
- ☐ Adjust your attitude – the most important actions you can take to avoid aggressive driving take place in your own head:
- ☐ Reduce your stress by leaving enough time to get where you are going
- ☐ Give the other driver some slack – maybe they are having a bad day

If you think *you* might have a problem with road rage, ask for help.

## Web Sites You Should Know

Want news on traffic incidents and more? Visit [www.chp.ca.gov](http://www.chp.ca.gov) (California Highway Patrol).

Do you want to know what it really is costing you to own and operate a vehicle in Southern California? Visit [www.aaa-calif.com](http://www.aaa-calif.com) (Automobile Club of Southern California).



Need driving directions and maps? Visit [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com) or [www.mapblast.com](http://www.mapblast.com) or [www.expedia.com](http://www.expedia.com).

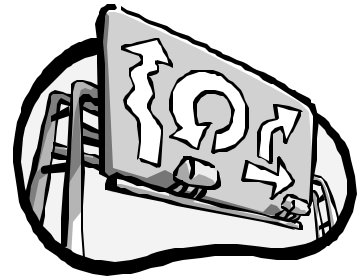
Need a list of places where you can leave your car and meet up with a carpool or vanpool group? Visit [www.socalcommute.org/toppnnr.htm](http://www.socalcommute.org/toppnnr.htm) for a map showing the location and details on Southern California’s Park & Ride lots.

These websites and others are also available through the Commuter Assistance Program web site [www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare](http://www.oc.ca.gov/hr/rideshare).

## Ridesharing On The Toll Roads

Carpoolers can save up to \$2.50 a day when using the 91 Freeway toll road. It offers half price tolls for vehicles with three or more people. Motorists must purchase a transponder that electronically deducts a fee every time the lanes are used. For more information, call (800) 600- 9191 or visit their web site at

[www.91expresslanes.com](http://www.91expresslanes.com)



## California Bike Commute Week 2001

Celebrate bicycling commuting! Participate in the California Bike Commute Week May 14 – 18<sup>th</sup>. This year's theme is "A Healthy Commute!" Ride your bike to work, school, errands or play, and do something great for yourself and the environment. For information on regional events call (714) 560-5400, or visit

[www.bikelink.com](http://www.bikelink.com).



California Bike Commute is a project of the California Bicycle Coalition (800) 679-BIKE. This year, the American Lung Association is also sponsoring California Bike Commute Week, and is also offering bicycling events around California to raise money for programs and services to prevent lung disease – bicycling is a big part of the solution, because it gets people out of their cars, which is a major source of air pollution in

California. For more information visit [www.californialung.org](http://www.californialung.org).

Southern Californians can also participate in Bike To Work Day, Thursday, May 17. You can register online at [www.californiabikecommute.com](http://www.californiabikecommute.com) – where you'll be eligible for lots of great prizes!

## Did You Know???

- ❑ The average American devotes 18 cents out of every dollar it spends for transportation.
- ❑ American families spend more on driving than on healthcare, education or food!
- ❑ Bicyclists are among the happiest commuters, ranking their ride a 7.7 on a scale of 1 (low) to 9 (high). Only those taking rail give a higher rating of 8.